

25th (Special) Congress of the  
**COMMUNIST PARTY**

**April 19 - 22, 1957**

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**Draft Revised Text of**  
**THE BRITISH ROAD TO**  
**SOCIALISM**

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# The British Road to Socialism

## Draft Revised Text

# COMMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The revision of our programme, *The British Road to Socialism*, was proposed at our Twenty-Fourth Congress, and the Executive Committee subsequently appointed a Commission to prepare a revised text.

This revision was necessary, not only because many of the detailed references in the original text had become out of date, but because events particularly since the Twentieth Congress of the C.P.S.U. had shown the need to deal more fully with some of the aspects of the transition to socialism which had only been briefly referred to previously. It was also desirable to reconsider the general presentation of our programme.

The Commission, details of which will be found on a later page, completed its work early in December, and the draft revised text came before the Executive Committee on 15 December 1956.

The Executive Committee was unanimous in expressing its appreciation of the work of the Commission, and its view that the new draft as a whole represents a great step forward in the way our programme is presented.

It decided to print and circulate the document to all Party organisations as a draft for discussion and amendment in preparation for our Special Congress at Easter 1957; and to make copies available to all members through the usual literature suppliers.

At the same time, the Executive Committee felt that the revised text needed strengthening on a number of points, some of which are indicated below under the section headings. Formal amendments, embodying these suggestions, will be put forward by the Executive Committee at a later stage.

### Introduction

One or two paragraphs should be added, making the points that the great majority of the Labour movement wants a Socialist Britain; that this can only be won through struggle against the present ruling class; and that in this struggle and in the future operation of socialism the organisations of the working class will have the leading part to play.

## **Socialism**

It should be made clear that the transition to socialism is a long and difficult struggle, in the course of which many serious problems will arise. These can only be solved, and mistaken policies corrected, with the active participation of the people.

The essential nobility and moral elevation of socialist society should be stressed.

In the reference to women, it should be stated that women will freely choose whether to go out to work or to look after their families.

The section as a whole should be written in a warmer and less abstract way.

## **Peace and Friendship with all Peoples**

In this section the need to break with every aspect of United States domination of British policy will have to be treated, as well as restating our concept of a free, strong and independent Britain.

## **Alliance of the British People with the Peoples of the Empire**

The Party's policy in relation to coloured people in Britain should be stated.

On the only issue on which there was a difference of opinion on the Commission—the question of the future relations between a Socialist Britain and all the Empire countries—the Executive Committee, by 29 votes to 5, with one abstention, decided to support the paragraph put forward by the majority of the Commission (see p. 12).

## **The Path to Socialism**

There should be a fuller treatment of the middle and professional sections, showing why it is in their interests to support the programme.

There should be a more detailed treatment of the organisational form of the alliance, including reference to the Labour Party and the Communist Party, and working class unity.

The sense of the paragraph in the 1955 draft "... the united action of all sections of the working class movement—Labour, trade union, co-operative and Communist—is the vital need. Only by united action between all sections of the Labour movement can the working class rally its forces and all its allies for decisive action to win a Parliamentary majority and form a People's Government" ought to be considered here.

Reference to the need for class struggle, both before and after a Socialist Government is established, should be expanded.

There have been tendencies in recent discussions suggesting that a peaceful transition to socialism means a complete absence of class struggle. We have to make it clear that it is only thorough political and industrial mass struggles that the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism can become a reality.

There should be a clearer presentation of the building up of the

broad alliance, cutting out repetitive points in the later paragraphs, and dealing more adequately with the fight for peace.

The language throughout the section needs to be improved.

### **Socialist Democracy and Liberty**

It should be stated clearly that the House of Lords and the Monarchy will be abolished.

### **The Use of Britain's Resources**

It should be stated that monopoly capitalism has preferred super-profits from colonial investment, rather than the modernisation of British industry.

In the Agriculture sub-section, there should be a reference to the importance of British livestock exports for breeding; and also to the need for better grassland management and improved methods of farming.

### **Socialist Nationalisation**

The sub-section dealing with the Co-operative movement needs further consideration, with the aim of showing in more detail the role of the Co-operative movement.

### **Social and Cultural Advance**

Tenants of tied houses should be guaranteed against eviction. Reference should be made to the encouragement of existing youth organisations, and their help in caring for the interests of young people.

### **The Communist Party and the Labour Movement**

The whole section could be rewritten in less abstract terms. The first paragraph should bring out more concretely the part that the Party has played in the actual experience of the British working class.

Professional workers' organisations should be included with the other organisations referred to in the fourth paragraph from the end.

\* \* \*

The Executive Committee asks all Party organisations and members to study this revised draft, to discuss it and send in comments and amendments which will help the Congress to finalise the document.

Amendments to the draft revised text of *The British Road to Socialism* must be sent in to reach Party Centre not later than 22 March 1957.

Where Branch resolutions deal with questions related to this draft they will be treated as amendments to it.

*For the Executive Committee*

HARRY POLLITT, Chairman

JOHN GOLLAN, Secretary.

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# THE BRITISH ROAD TO SOCIALISM

PROPOSALS OF THE COMMISSION FOR A  
REVISED TEXT

## INTRODUCTION

WHICH WAY is Britain going? What is the future for our country? Is this really, for the British people, the terrible twentieth century? Or can it be the century of a new social order and a better life for all?

Thoughtful people know that the answers to these questions are not simple ones. The twentieth century has been a period of tremendous scientific progress. Life has seemed for the majority of the British people since the Second World War in many ways better and more hopeful than before. There have been—as compared with fifty years ago—many real social advances; in conditions of work, in health, in education. 5 10

And yet—everyone is uncomfortably aware—the picture is not really one of the gradual and consistent solving of Britain's problems or of a steady improvement in the lives and prospects of our people. Twice in the last fifty years Britain has been involved in world wars of unprecedented horror which have brought the most appalling destruction and countless personal human tragedies. Today costly and unjust colonial wars waste lives and resources, and the danger of a third world war hangs over us. The period of the twenties and thirties remains in the minds of the British working class as a time of mass unemployment and great poverty; and although in the period of capitalist boom following the Second World War unemployment has not been the dominant fear that it then was, no thinking man believes this problem has been basically solved and no one contemplates the next ten years with the confident conviction that Britain's economic position is secure and hopeful. 15 20 25

We are dogged by "balance of payments" crises, fears of losing vital supplies like oil, fears of competition from other capitalist powers, heavy taxation, rising food prices, insecurity and unemployment. The British economy is, moreover, dominated and distorted by an armaments programme, backed up by two-year 30

conscription, out of all proportion to the needs of defence of our country; and the very social services which we should be defending and extending are, in the name of "defence", constantly being cut and whittled away. Our scientific and technical education lags  
5 behind modern needs. The condition of the old age pensioners is a national scandal, and among the young people there is a lack of confidence in a constructive future.

Why is it that such difficulties and dangers face the British people in what should be the age of plenty and unlimited social  
10 progress?

It is because the skill of our working people, the knowledge of our scientists, all the human and material resources of our country are being used, not for the benefit of the whole people, but for the profit of a small class of rich property-owners who now control the  
15 economic life of Britain.

This small class of big capitalists who own the banks and the big industrial concerns, and whose investments range all over the capitalist world, have one consistent aim: to increase their wealth and strengthen their privileged position at the expense of the  
20 people.

Every scientific advance, every new discovery, is used by them to increase their exploitation of the working people. It is to protect their interests that the heavy armaments burden is imposed on the people, and brutal colonial wars which shame the name of Britain  
25 are waged. Their great houses, their comfort and luxury, their junketings, are built on the sweat of working people, the slums and overcrowding of our cities, the scandalous treatment of our old folk, the backwardness and suffering of the colonial peoples. Capitalism and imperialism stand in the way of all human progress,  
30 and threaten our country with ruin.

For some time it has been clear that the days of British capitalism and imperialism are numbered. With the rise of other industrialised countries, British capitalism lost its privileged position in the world. The victories of the national liberation  
35 movements of the colonial peoples have made their continued exploitation by British imperialism impossible. Britain can no longer live in the old way.

The efforts of Britain's big capitalists to maintain their privileged position can only bring more and more economic and social hardships for the British people. The time has come for far-reaching  
40 social change, to bring in a new social order that will safeguard the interests of the people and our country's future.

Our people, led by the great Labour movement, have won important victories in their struggles against the grim injustices of  
45 the capitalist system.

Social advances never descend on the people from above. Every



one of the social reforms of the last century—measures like the limitation of child labour, the first elementary safety laws in the factories, things we now all take for granted as minimum human rights—all these were fought for with the sweat and blood of the workers and progressive men and women, and bitterly opposed—  
in the name of economy, patriotism, morality and even religion—  
by the privileged classes, the owners who lived on the profits they made from the work of the people.

The social advances of the twentieth century have been fought for, each and every one, by the people—in their trade unions, in their Co-ops, in their Communist Party branches, in their Labour Parties, in election campaigns, in demonstrations and deputations, by *Daily Worker* sellers and housewives with petitions, in strikes and study circles, through pamphlets and chalked slogans, in local councils and Parliament, in the mines and villages and factories up and down our country.

But all these gains have left intact the system of capitalist and imperialist exploitation, the system of rent, interest and profit. It is necessary to end this system and the social injustices, economic difficulties and wars that stem from it.

It is necessary for the Labour movement to realise that the economic, social and political struggles of the past need now to be carried forward into the struggle not merely to reform our society but to change it, to replace the system which puts power and property into the hands of a tiny minority who exploit the people for their personal gain, by a different kind of society; a society in which the people themselves own and control their country—a socialist, co-operative, classless society which can open up a new era in human history.

The British Labour movement has too long been dominated by an outlook which thinks only of partial reforms that leave the capitalist system unchanged, or which limits the nationalisation of the means of production and distribution to a few industries with the rest left in private hands; an outlook which seeks to compromise with capitalism rather than fight to end it.

This outlook, once known as Social Democracy, is today called by its advocates Democratic Socialism; but in practice it is support for the continued existence of capitalism and acceptance of imperialism, and it even tries to present capitalism and imperialism as if they have changed their nature.

Already there is a growing realisation within the Labour movement that this outlook does not help but hinders the attainment of Labour's aim.

The Communist Party seeks to win the whole Labour movement and all progressive sections of the people to the realisation that it is necessary to break with such policies, and to take the path that

leads to the ending of capitalism and the triumph of socialism in Britain.

5 For socialism alone is capable of providing lasting solutions to the problems that are hindering the British people from fulfilling their aspirations and achieving the sort of life they want.

10 A hundred years ago socialism was a dream of the future. Today in a third of the world capitalist society has been replaced by socialist society. In a third of the world the working class has won power. This is the significance of the Russian Revolution of 1917—that it broke for the first time the world front of capitalism, and made possible decisive new advances for the people of all countries.

15 The advance of socialism and the mighty movement of the colonial peoples against imperialism has not only narrowed the field of capitalist and imperialist exploitation—it has pointed the way forward for all peoples to a new world society of peace and human brotherhood.

20 The Communist Party believes that it is essential for all socialists and progressive people in our country to reconsider with the greatest care and candour the problems involved in the achievement of socialism, and in particular to examine the reasons for the weaknesses of past Labour Governments, so that past mistakes can be avoided in the future and the advance to socialism assured.

25 The Communist Party puts forward this programme, not because it thinks it knows all the answers nor in a spirit of hostility to the rest of the Labour movement, but in the conviction that these are matters of vital concern to all thinking people in the movement and can only be thrashed out by honest and comradely discussion.

### **SOCIALISM IS OUR AIM**

30 Socialism is the form of society in which the factories, mines, transport, banks and the land—all the means of production, distribution and exchange—are owned by the nation, and worked for the benefit of all.

Only in such a society can full economic, social and political democracy be achieved; only in such a society will the people be able to fulfil their aspirations and build the sort of life they want.

35 Socialism means the end of the exploitation of man by man. In capitalist society, the values created by the workers above the value of their wages are taken by the employers for their own profit. In socialist society, this exploitation is ended, because the factories and mills, the shipyards, the mines and the land pass to the nation as a whole, so that what the workers produce benefits themselves and the whole nation. Production is for use and not for profit.

40 National ownership of the means of production makes possible long-term planning, directed to building up our productive

resources and satisfying the constantly rising needs of the people.

Planned socialist production means an end to the production of unsalable surpluses which bring slumps and unemployment. These surpluses arise in capitalist society because the purchasing power of the people is held back, while production increases. In socialist society, every advance in production means also higher wages or lower prices, so that there is never any surplus that cannot be sold, never any economic crisis or unemployment.

5

Socialism works for peace and an end to wars, because in a socialist society there are no longer capitalists who, for the sake of profits, want to conquer new markets and spheres of investment, to exploit cheap labour in backward countries, or to crush their competitors by force.

10

Socialism ends the gulf between rich and poor, and frees the creative energies of the people and the productive resources of the country for gigantic economic, social and cultural advances.

15

Socialism means freedom for the people—freedom from poverty and insecurity, freedom for men, women and young people to develop their capacities to the full. For women it means equal rights with men in the social, economic and political life of the nation; for young people, the opening of new opportunities with the whole resources of the country behind them; for the family, a real home life, fuller interests, and closer ties based on security and new respect for the individual.

20

But socialism means the abolition of capitalism.

25

Those in the Labour movement who reject the need for complete social change, and seek compromise with capitalism rather than fighting to end it, hold back the advance to socialism.

They reject the view that the cause of class struggle, and the need for the working class to end the capitalist system, is the exploitation of the workers, the robbery from them of what they produce over and above their wages, and that this exploitation is inseparable from the private ownership of the means of production, which must be ended if exploitation is to cease.

30

They reject the view that the drive for profits of the big monopolies is the basis of imperialist wars and conquests, and that the interests of the working class demand an end to all such policies, and respect for the right of all peoples to determine their own future.

35

They reject the view that in order to win a better life, the working class must win and keep political power, and use it for the socialist transformation of Britain, no matter what resistance comes from the rich property-owners.

40

Such trends in the Labour movement hold back the advance to socialism.

45

It is because the post-war Labour Governments, while intro-

ducing a number of progressive and desirable measures, left the system of exploitation intact and followed imperialist policies abroad, that the people turned away from them and the Tories got back into office.

- 5 The Labour movement needs to draw the lesson. Socialism cannot be reconciled with the continuance of capitalist and imperialist exploitation. The fight against capitalism and imperialism is the only way forward to socialism.

### **PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP WITH ALL PEOPLES**

- 10 Whatever religious or political views they hold, it is in the interests of all the people of Britain to play their full part in the efforts to maintain peace.

- 15 Two world wars during this century have had terrible consequences for our people. They have resulted in the loss of millions of lives, great harm to Britain's economy, and heavy burdens on the people. A third world war would have even more disastrous effects. It would be waged with atomic and hydrogen weapons, would cause untold havoc, and could result in the annihilation of Britain as we know it today.

- 20 But the Communist Party declares that a third world war is not inevitable.

- 25 Although differing economic and social systems exist in the world today, it is possible for them to live in peace, to settle differences between them without war, and to develop co-operation in the economic and cultural fields. The five principles of peaceful co-existence originally agreed upon between China and India are the basis on which this can be achieved. They are: mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in one another's domestic affairs, equality and mutual advantage, peaceful co-existence and economic co-operation. These principles are supported by the Soviet Union and many other states.

- 30 War can be prevented and peaceful co-existence maintained because today all the forces necessary to realise this aim exist in the world.

- 35 There is a powerful group of socialist countries; there are great countries like India, also working for peace; there is the peace movement and the Labour movement in the capitalist countries; there is the strong colonial liberation movement. These represent a mighty force which is capable of preventing the outbreak of a third world war.

- 40 But peaceful co-existence can only be maintained by the active struggle of the people and all the forces of peace in the world. For peace is still in grave danger. Huge armament programmes are still being carried through. The Western powers still refuse to



agree to disarmament and the banning of atomic and hydrogen weapons.

Imperialism still tries to maintain its grip on the colonial peoples by force and violence. The British and French attack on Egypt showed the length to which the imperialists will go in their efforts to defeat the national liberation movements.

The divisions and contradictions between the imperialist countries have greatly increased, and will grow sharper, giving rise to the possibility of new conflicts.

The menace of war also arises from the rearmament of Western Germany—which means the strengthening of the militarist and fascist forces which were responsible for Nazism. Aggressive military blocs, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, still exist and are planning future operations on the assumption that war will be waged with atomic and hydrogen weapons against the Soviet Union.

Thus the threat of war remains, arising from the policies of imperialism. The endeavour to maintain colonialism, the aim of imperialism to try to hold back the advance of socialism by the use of force, the divisions between the imperialist countries themselves—all these give rise to the danger of war.

The British people, therefore, need to increase their efforts to preserve peace, end the existing wars, and prevent a third world war. The British Labour movement, the peace organisations and individuals and bodies of the most varying views, have it in their power to speak and act unitedly for peace and ensure that Britain's strength in the world is used on the side of peace.

The Communist Party expresses its readiness to join with all other organisations in working to prevent another war. It works for peace because a third world war would be a disaster for our people and for all peoples, and because peace provides the most favourable conditions for the advance to socialism in Britain.

It is capitalism that gives rise to the danger of war. A Socialist Britain, like all other socialist countries, would have no interest in war. Socialist countries do not need colonies or spheres of investment for obtaining super-profits. What they produce is for the people's needs, and since they have abolished private profit they have no need to conquer foreign markets, but only to trade honestly on a free and equal basis.

A socialist foreign policy can only be a policy of peace: a Socialist Government would break with imperialist war policies and alliances, pursue an independent British foreign policy, aim to establish friendly relations with all countries, and especially would co-operate with other socialist countries on the basis of equality and national independence.

The need for Britain to pursue a policy of peace is underlined

by the results of the preparations for war. They have brought heavy burdens of taxation on our people, cuts in the social services, two years' conscription for our youth, a worsening of our trade position, the disruption of East-West trade, and short-time and unemployment in various industries. The war alliance with the United States has resulted in the stationing of American troops and aircraft in Britain, and an undermining of our national independence.

A great contribution to the preservation of world peace would be made by a free, strong and independent Britain pursuing a foreign policy based on the following principal points:

**The settlement of all international problems by negotiation, and in accordance with the United Nations Charter.**

**Support for collective action to prevent or halt aggression.**

**An end to association with war alliances like the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, and withdrawal of U.S. forces from Britain.**

**The ending of the colonial wars and all attempts to dominate other countries.**

**A peaceful settlement in Europe through the establishment of a European collective security system and the achievement of a peaceful, united Germany through talks between East and West Germany. This would make possible the withdrawal of all foreign troops from European countries.**

**An all-round reduction of armaments and the banning of atomic and hydrogen weapons, enforced by international control and inspection. The immediate ending of tests of such weapons as a step towards this end.**

**The admission of the Chinese People's Republic to the United Nations.**

**The ending of the restrictions on East-West trade, and the fullest encouragement of trade, cultural and other exchanges between East and West.**

This policy would throw all Britain's strength on to the side of peace, help make a third world war impossible, and safeguard the national independence of the British people.

## **ALLIANCE OF THE BRITISH PEOPLE WITH THE PEOPLES OF THE EMPIRE**

The victory of socialism in Britain requires a decisive break with all policies of imperialism, of the domination and exploitation of other nations. This corresponds to the true national interests equally of the British people and of all the peoples of the Empire. The fulfilment of this aim requires the alliance of all the peoples of the Empire in pursuit of their common interests against the policies of imperialism.



The wealth and power of the British capitalist class has been built up on the exploitation not only of the British working people, but of one-quarter of the world. Armed aggression and conquest, plunder of resources, unequal trade and ruthless exploitation of colonial workers and peasants have provided for centuries tribute from the colonial system to enrich the British capitalists. 5

Today the freedom struggle of the peoples of the Empire has won great victories. For years the older Dominions have enjoyed effective independence, which in our own time has been won by the long and heroic struggle of the Indian people and of other peoples. In the remaining subject colonial empire of 80 million the liberation struggle of the peoples, which has already in many cases extorted partial constitutional concessions, is advancing with ever greater strength. The national liberation movement of the colonial peoples is invincible. 10 15

But the colonial system is not yet dead. The Empire rulers strive by every means, both through old forms of direct colonial wars and repression, and through new forms of intervention, to maintain their domination and exploitation over wide areas of the world. 20

Where they have been forced by the revolt of the peoples to concede independence, they strive still to maintain their grip on the resources of the former colony, and continue to draw vast profits. They seek to draw the newly independent countries into their net through the methods of the new colonialism: the formation of military blocs, such as the Baghdad Pact or the South-East Asia Treaty, the establishment of bases, or economic intervention disguised as "aid". This gives rise to renewed liberation struggles, as in the Middle East, against these imperialist policies of military and economic intervention and domination. 25 30

In the remaining colonial empire they have conducted savage colonial wars and repression to crush the freedom movement of the people, as in Malaya, Kenya and Cyprus. Where they have been forced to concede partial constitutional reforms, they have sought to delay liberation and maintain supreme power as long as possible in the hands of the Governor and British officials. In British Guiana, when the Ministers elected by a democratic majority through universal suffrage were displeasing to the British rulers, they sent warships and troops to replace the constitution by direct dictatorship. 35 40

The colour bar is maintained in East Africa, Central Africa and South Africa, and in various degrees exists in other territories. Repressive anti-democratic measures operate throughout the colonial empire. Economic and social conditions of extreme poverty, starvation wages and the lack, or niggardly provision, of elementary social services are the counterpart of the gigantic profits 45

drawn from these countries by the British monopolies. Colonial exploitation has been sharply increased during recent years.

5 The interests of the British people are wholly opposed to these imperialist policies of aggression against other nations or endeavouring to maintain the colonial system of domination and exploitation of subject peoples. The profits of the Empire go to the big monopolists; the people pay the costs. These policies bring only ruinous burdens for the British people, the distortion of Britain's economy, crippling rearmament and crushing taxation to meet the costs of overseas military expenditure, and the sacrifice of Britain's youth to serve in colonial wars of aggression. They create relations of hostility and hatred between the colonial peoples and Britain.

10 The imperialists declare that these policies of overseas military aggression, domination and exploitation are essential for the economic needs of Britain, to maintain the supplies of food and raw materials for Britain's industry and standard of living. The alternative, they declare, would mean starvation and mass unemployment in Britain.

20 This is false. It is their policies of creating hostility and war between Britain and overseas peoples under their domination, of overseas military aggression, that are endangering Britain's supplies of food and raw materials. All the oil, the rubber, the tin, the sugar, the cocoa, the palm kernels, will be plentifully forthcoming and assured on a basis of equal exchange, so soon as friendly relations on the basis of the recognition of national independence and equal rights are established.

25 The imperialists allege that their rule benefits the colonial peoples and raises their standards by extending to them aid through colonial development and welfare schemes and the like.

30 This claim is false. The "aid" extended under these schemes is not directed to promote the independent economic development and industrialisation of these countries, but to facilitate further imperialist penetration and exploitation. The money thus spent is only a fraction of the amount drawn in plunder from these countries by the big monopolies. The ending of this plunder is the first essential for the independent economic development and conquest of poverty in these countries, on the basis of national independence, thereby making possible real aid from the British people in these tasks of reconstruction and industrialisation.

40 The British imperialists seek to turn aside the British working people from the struggle against imperialism by asserting that, if Britain were to "lose the colonies", the standard of living of the British people would go down. This assertion has also been repeated by a part of the leadership of the Labour movement, and has been used to mislead some sections of the workers.

45 This argument, also, is false. It is the cost of endeavouring to

maintain the colonial system, the colonial wars, overseas military expenditure and crushing burden of armaments that is the main immediate factor which underlies Britain's economic difficulties and recurring deficits in the balance of payments, and which depresses the standard of living. A Socialist Britain, freed from overseas military commitments, and entering into new relations of friendly co-operation and equal exchange with the former colonial peoples, on the basis of national independence and mutual aid in the tasks of reconstruction, will be able rapidly to raise the standard of living in Britain, at the same time as freely assisting the advance of the liberated colonial peoples.

A people which enslaves another people forges its own chains. In the common interests equally of the British people, the subject colonial peoples and all the peoples of the present Empire, the British Labour movement should seek to build a firm alliance in the struggle against all imperialist policies, for the national independence of all the subject peoples of the Empire, and for future fraternal co-operation of mutual benefit on the basis of national independence.

This alliance needs to be built up in the common daily struggle on immediate issues, against colonial wars and acts of repression, against the colour bar and racial discrimination, for the extension of democratic and trade union rights in the colonial territories, and through trade union solidarity, exchange of delegations and similar means of building up contact and co-operation.

This alliance needs to be directed towards the aims of national independence and self-determination for all the peoples of the Empire as the basis for future fraternal co-operation.

This alliance is the common interest of the British people and of all the peoples of the Empire. Every victory of the national liberation struggle against British imperialism strengthens the struggle of the British working class against the same monopoly capitalists in Britain. Every victory of the British workers against the British capitalists strengthens the national liberation struggle of the colonial and dependent peoples of the Empire.

In order to make possible the exercise of the right of self-determination, all British armed forces must be withdrawn from colonial and dependent territories, military bases and spheres of influence.

The withdrawal of troops from Northern Ireland is necessary to end the enforced partition of Ireland, and leave the Irish people free to establish their united Republic which can maintain friendly relations with Britain.

In all colonial and dependent territories sovereignty should be handed over to Governments freely chosen by the peoples. Achievement of such a united victory for freedom against imperialism by

the British people and the peoples of the Empire would open the way to a new and positive perspective for friendly and fraternal relations and co-operation of mutual benefit between free peoples. All existing relations which are based on the economic, political and military domination of the colonial peoples would be replaced by voluntary close fraternal relations based on full national independence and equal rights. All natural resources and assets owned by British capital in the former colonies should be restored to the liberated peoples. In the gigantic tasks of reconstruction on which the former colonial peoples will be engaged after the victory of independence, to end the heritage of colonial economy, carry through industrialisation, modernise agriculture and raise living standards, British industry will be able to play its full part in affording technical and economic aid, through the supply of machinery, and technicians, availability of scientific and technical information, and through grants or credits on easy terms. Thus mutually beneficial economic relations of co-operation will replace the old imperialist relations of foreign ownership of resources, tribute-drawing and exploitation. At the same time the friendly relations between Britain and the existing independent states of the Commonwealth can be strengthened and carried forward on a new basis to extending mutually beneficial co-operation.

In accordance with these aims a Socialist Government in Britain would:

**Recognise the complete independence and right of self-determination of all countries in the Colonial Empire at the time of its coming to power; and for this purpose withdraw all armed forces from the colonial and dependent territories or occupied spheres of influence, and hand over sovereignty to Governments freely chosen by the peoples;**

**Propose to all countries of the Commonwealth and former Empire voluntary participation in a close fraternal association, based on national independence, equal rights and non-intervention in each other's internal affairs, to promote their mutual economic, political and cultural interests, and for mutual defence against any imperialist attempts to undermine their independence.**

*Note:* An alternative to the preceding paragraph is proposed by a minority of the Commission, as follows:

**Promote close voluntary fraternal relations for economic, political and cultural co-operation of mutual benefit, on the basis of national independence, equal rights and non-interference in internal affairs, between Britain and the liberated colonial countries and all countries of the existing Commonwealth willing to develop such relations.**



## THE PATH TO SOCIALISM

The British working class, supported by other progressive sections of the people, has waged a ceaseless fight against the rule of the rich property-owners. In over a century of struggle it has won the rights of free speech, press and organisation; the right to vote; the right to strike.

5

British men and women have used these democratic rights to secure far-reaching improvements in their working and living conditions and to build up great trade union and co-operative movements, and finally political parties aiming at the socialist transformation of Britain.

10

But in spite of these great advances won by the people against bitter resistance, real power in Britain is still concentrated in the hands of the tiny section of rich property-owners who own more than half the wealth of the country and draw immense sums from the exploitation of colonial peoples. They control the greater part of the land, large-scale industry, finance and trade. Their representatives, drawn for the most part from ruling class circles and trained in the outlook of the ruling class, hold the commanding positions in the state apparatus—the armed forces and police, the Civil Service, the diplomatic and colonial services. They also control broadcasting, television, and practically all the newspapers and periodicals and the cinemas. Even the formal democratic rights of the people are limited in practice by lack of money, the refusal of owners to let halls, and similar restrictions.

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In order therefore to advance to socialism, the dominant position of the rich must be ended. Political power must be taken from the hands of the capitalist minority, and firmly grasped by the majority of the people, led by the working class.

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Life itself has shown that the people of different countries, led by the working class, can take power into their own hands in different ways, according to the conditions in each country and the international situation.

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So also the people of our country will take power in their own way, on the background of their historical conditions and traditions, and not in ways or through forms and institutions that were dictated by the internal and external conditions of Russia, China or the European people's democracies.

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More than a third of the world's population has already taken the socialist road. Twelve hundred millions of what were once colonial and dependent peoples have thrown off their imperialist masters and won independence. The organised strength of the working people is now so great that the peaceful transition to socialism is possible in many countries.

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In our country, with its powerful Labour movement and long tradition of democratic institutions, we can develop what is now

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capitalist democracy, dominated by wealth and privilege, into socialist democracy, where only the interests of the people count. We can transform Parliament, using the rights already won in Britain's historic struggle for democracy, into the effective instrument of the people's will, through which the major legislative measures of the socialist transformation will be carried.

The forces exist which, if united and determined, can carry through this change.

The working class of Britain in industry and agriculture, with their families, constitute fully two-thirds of the population. The security and future prospects also of other sections of the people are closely bound up with those of the industrial workers. The great bulk of clerical and professional workers, teachers, technicians and scientists, working farmers, shopkeepers and small business men, are victims of the reactionary policies of Tory big business at home and abroad.

The essential condition for the advance to socialism is the building up of an alliance between the working class and these other sections of the people, in the struggle against big business and the Tories.

Such an alliance, once established, would represent a mighty political force, able to defeat the present rulers and exploiters of the British people, and to return to Parliament a majority which represents the interests of all working people and a Socialist Government determined to carry through, with their active backing, a policy which will open out a new and glorious future for our country.

The key features of this policy would be:

**Break the power of the millionaire monopolists and other big capitalists by socialist nationalisation of large-scale industry, the banks, big distributive monopolies, insurance companies and the land of the big landowners; and establish control of foreign trade in the interests of the people.**

**Introduce a planned economy based on socialist principles aimed at fundamental social change and rapid improvement in the working and living conditions of the people; and ensure the effective participation of the workers by hand and brain and their organisations in planning and management at every level.**

**Consolidate the political power of the working people by ensuring that those in commanding positions in the armed forces and police, the Civil Service and diplomatic services are loyal to the Government and increasingly representative of the people; and by democratic electoral reform, democratic ownership of the press, and control of broadcasting by the people.**

**Strengthen and extend all democratic rights and liberties, and ensure the just administration of the law.**



**Recognise the right of all subject peoples to self-determination, and propose a voluntary association of all countries in the Empire, on a basis of equal rights, for mutual benefit.**

**Make Britain strong, free and independent, with a foreign policy of peace and friendship with all nations.**

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Experience shows that the big capitalists whose interests are threatened by the advance to socialism may not accept the democratic verdict of the people, and may resort to illegal forms of resistance. It will therefore be necessary for the Socialist Government and the people to be vigilant in preventing any such action, and to deal decisively with those responsible if it arises.

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The complete defeat of the Tories and the big business interests they represent, and peace and social advance, are the twin aims around which Labour and progressive forces can be united, and a movement of overwhelming strength built up.

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The development of this movement requires a consistent fight against Tory policies through Parliament and through the councils, with the active support of working people in industry and in the constituencies. The strength and determination of workers' representatives in elected bodies depends on the strength and determination of the movement outside.

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Alongside the fight in Parliament and the councils, therefore, the millions of men and women in the Labour movement, drawing in the support of all progressive people, will need to use their political and industrial strength to prevent reactionary policies from being carried through.

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Tory policies of high prices, credit restrictions, the creation of short time and unemployment, and "economy" measures in housing and the social services, need to be defeated by the mass struggle of the people for higher wages, salaries, benefits and pensions, shorter working hours, more houses, schools and hospitals, and all-round improvements in the working and living conditions of the people.

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The fight to improve Britain's economic position and to safeguard employment will be won, not through fruitless sacrifices by working people, but by the defeat of war policies and reactionary economic measures, together with increasing control by the organised workers of economic and industrial development, especially the introduction of automation.

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Political and economic struggle against the big capitalists, and not concessions to capitalism, will break down Tory support among professional workers, small business people and working farmers, and draw them into alliance with the working class.

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The fight against every aspect of imperialist policy is the issue on which the widest sections of the people can be brought into action.

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As the mass struggle of the people develops, alongside and supporting the activity of working class representatives in Parliament and the councils, the danger will arise that the most reactionary sections of the big capitalists will seek to weaken and restrict the democratic rights of the people. The working class and progressive movement needs therefore to be vigilant and to defeat any attempt to block the road to democratic advance. Our democratic rights must be fully maintained and extended if the will of the people is to prevail.

In the fight for the common interests of all working people the unity and fighting strength of the Labour movement will be built up, and it will draw around it all the progressive forces of the people. The alliance of all sections of the population determined to end the arbitrary power of the rich over Britain's future will have as its core the united working class—the class that is most concerned to win a new order of society.

Together, the working class and progressive movement can defeat all attempts to maintain capitalism at the expense of the people, and establish a really Socialist Government to carry through, with their active participation, the socialist transformation of Britain.

### **SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY AND LIBERTY**

The measures outlined above will put an end to the power and privilege of the rich and thus form the foundation of a socialist society with equal rights and opportunities for all.

All our institutions must be infused with the spirit of democracy, reliance on the people and confidence in their determination to build a socialist society free from bureaucracy and injustice.

A Socialist Government will therefore extend and develop democratic forms of initiative and control over every aspect of national life. A key role will be carried out by the trade unions, without which no socialist democracy can properly function. The people will be encouraged to take a much greater part in the business of government, and in deciding national and local government policy. The Government will safeguard the full enjoyment of all democratic rights and of collective and personal freedom. It will ensure the provision of positive opportunities for all to employ their abilities in the most fruitful manner.

To this end a Socialist Government will:

**Ensure that the ordinary people and their organisations are drawn into active participation in the control and administration of all spheres of national and local life. Tendencies towards over-centralisation and bureaucracy will be resisted.**

**Extend collective and personal freedom by removing existing restrictions upon the exercise of civil rights and democratic liberties. The legal guarantees of freedom will be reinforced by**

**the vigilance of the democratic organisations of the people and the institutions of the socialist state.**

**Introduce democratic changes into the administration of justice based on the rule of law.**

Such an extension of democracy and liberty can, however, only be guaranteed by decisive measures to break the economic and political power of the monopoly capitalists and landlords. A Socialist Government which draws its strength from a united movement of the people of Britain, based on the working class, will be able to mobilise the overwhelming majority of the country for this task. 5 10

### **Democracy in Government**

One of the first steps of the Socialist Government will, therefore, be to make the legislative and executive machinery of the country continuously responsible to the democratic will of the people and to enable ordinary people to play an active and direct part in every sphere of national and local life. 15

In the parliamentary field such a Government will ensure the supremacy of the House of Commons by making it the sole national authority, freed from the restrictive influences of the House of Lords and the Monarchy. It would improve the possibility of a proper expression of popular opinion by introducing proportional representation, and by extending the franchise to all over the age of eighteen. The right of political parties to maintain their organisation, press and propaganda and to take part in elections will be guaranteed. 20 25

The national claims of the Scottish and Welsh peoples will be fully recognised and will be settled in accordance with their wishes.

In the field of local government, a Socialist administration would seek to reverse the trend of recent times which has tended to increase the control of Whitehall and to deprive local bodies of many of their former powers. It would give greater responsibility and freedom to local authorities, since they are in much closer contact with the daily needs of the people; and it would ensure that local authorities have adequate finances of their own, from local and national sources. It would also in the course of time carry through a thorough reform of the present out-of-date structure of local government. Finally, it would be desirable if local organisations such as trades councils, tenants' committees, parent-teachers' associations and old age pensions' associations could be given a recognised status in relation to the work of local councils and their committees. 30 35 40

A Socialist Government will have to pay special attention to the question of the personnel staffing the various branches of the administration, the Civil Service, the police, and the armed forces. 45

It will welcome all existing officials who are willing to serve loyally under the new administration, but will replace any who prove incapable of efficiently interpreting and carrying out the policy of a Socialist Government. It will broaden the entry into the Civil Service, and particularly the Foreign Office, in order to remove from the Civil Service its present class character and outlook. Full opportunity for promotion from the ranks will be established and the democratic rights of its members will be extended.

The police must be transformed in a similar way, and in addition to full opportunity for promotion from the ranks, the democratic rights of citizens in the armed forces will be extended and the loyalty of leading personnel ensured.

### **Liberty and Democratic Rights**

There is a strong tradition of civil liberty in Britain. The democratic rights which exist were won, however, only by generations of struggle by the people, and they are still restricted and constantly threatened.

A Socialist Government will remove restrictions on democratic rights and freedom. At the same time it will strengthen the political and legal rights which, together with the ending of class privilege, will ensure the right to all to enjoy freedom to think, work, travel, speak, dissent, act and believe, subject only to those limitations necessarily required in any ordered and just society to protect citizens from interference and exploitation at the hands of others, and to protect the state. Women will have rights and opportunities equal to those of men. The right to strike will be guaranteed.

Maximum freedom means trusting the people, having confidence in their wisdom and good sense. The institutions in a Socialist Britain must be such as to encourage and keep alive the democratic spirit, encourage democratic participation and discourage bureaucracy, encourage criticism from below and discourage arbitrary decisions from above.

In capitalist democracy the vast majority of the nation's newspapers are owned by a few millionaires and combines. Policy is dictated by these owners and the advertisers. This is clearly the opposite of press freedom, which is only maintained by a few working class and local independent newspapers.

A Socialist Government will guarantee freedom of the press. In order to make this freedom a reality the millionaire-owned press combines and newspapers will be taken out of the hands of their present owners and placed at the disposal of national and local popular organisations. In this way the press will reflect the views, needs and criticisms of ordinary people instead of being mainly the mouthpiece of the powerful sections of capitalist society.

The radio and television services will be made responsible to



Parliament and democratic public organisations will be represented on their controlling bodies.

Freedom of religious worship will be guaranteed, and all religious creeds and beliefs respected.

### **Administration of Justice**

A Socialist Government will introduce democratic changes into the administration of justice in conformity with the best historical traditions of this country.

The judiciary will be independent of the Government and subject only to the law. The appointment of judges will be subject to approval by Parliament. Magistrates will be nominated by local trade union, co-operative and other representative organisations. The right to sit on a jury, at present restricted, will be extended by the removal of property qualifications.

Corporal punishment will be prohibited and the death penalty will be abolished.

All persons will be presumed innocent until their guilt is established. No person will be convicted on a confession made to or secured by the police.

Habeas Corpus will be preserved to ensure that no person is imprisoned except under the law. The best traditions of English law will be preserved and the law will be simplified and codified. A free legal aid and advice service will be provided for those in need of it in order to make the resources of legal redress more easily available to all.

During the initial stages of carrying out the policy outlined in this document there will be a real danger that the big capitalists may use illegal means in an attempt to thwart the building of the new society by the majority of the community. It would be wrong to believe that they will voluntarily give up their property and their profits in the interests of the British people.

It would be more correct to expect them to offer active resistance to the socialist measures adopted by Parliament, and to fight for the retention of their privileges by all means in their power, including force.

The Government, backed by the organised workers, will therefore be ready to ensure that the programme decided upon by Parliament is operated in practice, and that all attempts to sabotage it are defeated.

At the same time bureaucracy and arbitrary action by officials must not be tolerated. To prevent them the utmost vigilance must be exercised by the people and the Government, and it must be made possible to expose such acts in Parliament and appeal against them to democratic tribunals.

By the above means a Socialist Government will secure to all

both the right and the means to enjoy freedom and security to an extent never known before. This is essential to the advance to Socialism and to the achievement of that full and free life that is the goal of a socialist society.

### **THE USE OF BRITAIN'S RESOURCES**

5     The primary aim of a Socialist Britain will be to provide a full and happy life for all its citizens. This will entail not only a more equal distribution of the wealth that is already being produced but the full use of all resources and an enormous increase in productivity, made possible by the application and development of the  
10    new techniques of the mid-twentieth century.

      The scientific and technical knowledge we already possess, if fully applied, could bring a far higher standard of living than we have today. Mankind stands on the threshold of a new age, in which the grinding toil that has been the lot of humanity since  
15    the beginning of human society will no longer be necessary and can be done away with once and for all.

### **The Transformation of British Industry**

      Socialism, production for use, removes the barriers imposed by the system of production for profit. National ownership of the  
20    means of production ends the exploitation of man by man; workers then know that they are working for themselves and for their country. A national plan ensures the steady advance of all sections of industry, agriculture and trade, for the benefit of the people, without overlapping and waste. Planned production and distribu-  
25    tion bring security and guarantee full employment; every advance in production is reflected in lower prices and higher wages and social benefits.

      It is for these reasons that in a Socialist Britain our human and material resources will for the first time be fully used.

30    Britain has rich resources: the skill and discipline of our working people, and the fund of experience in technology and science; our great industrial enterprises, our transport and shipping; and the natural resources of mines, fields and seas.

      The great achievement of Britain in the past has been the  
35    versatility of industry, able to turn rapidly from one kind of production to another, and the practical imagination of scientists and engineers inventing radically new ideas and devices, from the steam engine and the railways down to radar and jet engines. This capacity, freed from the restrictions of monopoly capitalism, will  
40    be able to show itself far more in a Socialist Britain.

      A Socialist Britain will make the fullest use of the three major new factors in the scientific revolution of our time: atomic energy, automation, and scientific research on an altogether new scale.



Peace and friendship with all peoples and the end of colonialism will mean a substantial reduction in armaments expenditure, and the release of considerable capacity now locked up in the Forces and armaments production. The effect will be all the greater on account of the quality of the services that would be rapidly put to peaceful uses—the highest grade engineering involved in military aircraft, guided missiles, radar and nuclear weapons; thousands of the best applied scientists and engineers; and research and development equipment some five times as great as that hitherto available for civil purposes. 5 10

The national plan for British industry and agriculture in the early years of socialism will have three great aims:

**Rapidly raising the standard of life, in all its aspects, of the British people;**

**Increasing the productive capacity of our industry and agriculture on the basis of the most modern technique;** 15

**Maintaining the export of the high quality capital and consumption goods for which Britain is already famous, in exchange mainly for raw materials and food; and supplying the former colonial countries with the productive equipment they need for industrialisation.** 20

Trade with other countries, both within and outside the Empire, is of special importance to Britain, which now imports half the food supplies and two-thirds of the raw materials she needs. The further development of British agriculture and the ending of trade bans with the socialist countries will ease Britain's position; but it will be essential to maintain and extend trading relations with all countries. 25

The fear is sometimes expressed, even within the Labour movement, that a Britain without imperialist possessions and colonial tribute will be unable to pay its way in the world, and that our standard of life might have to fall in such conditions. While there will certainly be problems of adjustment to solve, in fact the end of colonialism will remove many present burdens on the people, and create conditions in which our own resources can be fully used. 30 35

There is no need to fear that by helping the industrialisation of undeveloped countries Britain will be "cutting its own throat" and lowering the demand for its exports. Experience has shown that the chief market for machinery is in already developed countries, while that for high-quality consumption goods is bound to rise with the rise in the standard of living abroad. Every advance towards industrialisation will raise the standard of living in previously backward countries, providing a better market for our exports, which can never thrive on the poverty of other countries. 40 45

## **Atomic Energy, Fuel and Power**

Britain, more than any other industrial country, needs atomic energy. Heavily industrialised, dependent on manufacture and exports for livelihood, our need for nuclear power is acute.

5 Britain's scientists and engineers have shown that they have the capacity to develop the new source of power rapidly. What is now holding it back, and also making it more expensive, has been the priority given to the production of nuclear weapons. Without that  
10 limitation, power could be produced more abundantly and cheaply than ever before, and its use could be extended throughout industry; it would make possible the electrification of our whole railway system.

The full development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes would contribute to bringing into being immense new productive  
15 forces, making substantial economies in labour and transport, and paving the way for abundance and more leisure for the people.

For the foreseeable future, however, coal will still be needed in quantities as great or greater than at present, not only for power and heat production but also as raw material for greatly expanded  
20 metal and chemical industries. Mines will need to be modernised and automatised, with remote control of the heaviest and most dangerous tasks to put an end to the hardships and dangers of the miner's life. Wherever possible other extraction methods, such as underground gasification, must be developed. Hydro-electric  
25 schemes will also be pushed forward. Crude coal burning should rapidly be eliminated, and with it the production of smoke and acid fumes.

## **Heavy Industry and Engineering: Automation**

Heavy industry will be as important as ever, but will be radically  
30 transformed and modernised so as to achieve greater efficiency and better conditions for the workers. With more available power, the use of gas and electricity in steel-making will grow, and new developments may well replace existing blast furnaces and coke ovens.

35 The engineering industry, with its mechanical, electrical and shipbuilding branches, will remain our country's key industry, with its efficiency enormously increased by the widespread application of automation. Automation marks a great leap forward in man's power to produce. In capitalist society this brings with it  
40 redundancy and frustration for large numbers of workers. In socialist society, it means that the wealth available to the people is increased, with higher wages and shorter hours.

It is for this reason that only in a Socialist Britain can the transformation of British engineering to increasingly automatic  
45 production be carried through rapidly and smoothly; its intro-

duction in each industry will bring not unemployment but improved working and living conditions for the people. It will lead to the upgrading and retraining of engineering workers for more responsible and interesting tasks, while during the change-over there will be extra demands on engineering production for the new machines. 5

As its use is extended, the greater output achieved through automation will benefit the whole people, bringing higher wages, lower prices, and a reduction in working hours.

While the engineering industry must maintain its versatility and high quality of production, there will have to be a greater degree of standardisation, maintaining variety but reducing the present unnecessary and wasteful number of types that keep up the cost of our engineering products. This would be part of the general change to pooled technical information, which would ensure that the advance made in any part of British industry is available to all of it. 10 15

### **Transport**

Once we get rid of the confusion and obstruction due to private interests, we can build up an integrated system of transport by rail, road, canal and sea, end the chaos of competition that results in overlapping and wasteful transport of goods, and ensure adequate transport services for every part of the country. 20

### **Other Industries**

Of other industries, the greatest developments may be expected in the heavy chemical industry, turning out plastics and new fibres for an expanded textile industry, and fertilisers for agriculture at home and abroad. The fine chemical industry, no longer tied up with commercial interests and restrictive patents, will produce an ever-improving range of drugs indicated by medical research. 25 30

The textile industries, with the growing use of man-made fibres, and all branches of light industry, will benefit increasingly from automation and scientific research.

The higher standard of living both at home and in former colonial countries will bring a steadily increasing demand for the products of our light industries. 35

### **Agriculture**

All available land will be used to produce food, and scientific research will be organised at Government expense to improve soils, crops and livestock. Working farmers will get the financial help they need; all forms of co-operative working, including marketing, joint use of machinery and joint cultivation of the land, will be encouraged. 40

No longer exploited by big business suppliers and middlemen—the fertiliser and feeding-stuffs trusts, the wholesalers, the millers, the distributive monopolies—the farming community will gain from the rising standards of the whole people, and will enjoy a lasting prosperity without fear of gluts and slumps.

The larger British farms are already heavily mechanised, and the yields from the best lands are among the highest in the world; but total production could be considerably increased by bringing more land into cultivation, supplementing fodder supplies from bacterial and chemical sources, and fuller use of agricultural wastes.

Development in agricultural production must be linked with the raising of farm wages and the improvement of amenities in the villages.

## 15 Scientific Research

The job of transforming British industry and agriculture under socialism will require the fullest initiative and ingenuity of workers in securing steady technical advance, and this advance will be flexible enough, since vested interests will no longer count, to absorb from time to time the radically new methods and processes derived from scientific research.

Under capitalism scientific research is largely limited to military purposes, and to the private interests of the big monopolies; the results of research are generally kept secret, and not made available to all sections of industry. In a Socialist Britain, scientific research for peaceful purposes would be greatly extended, and its results made available to all, so that it could best serve the whole people.

The most direct effect of science on human welfare is through medicine, as has already been shown by the recent great advances in dealing with infectious diseases. Research on a scale many times the present would be needed to deal with chronic and killing diseases such as rheumatism, heart diseases and cancer.

The full value of scientific research is not, however, limited to its foreseeable application to the betterment of human life. Fundamental science especially which underlies all applied science, will gain in importance as its discoveries illumine more and more of man's environment and human society and personality. Under socialism the great heritage of British science would be preserved and enlarged since, for the first time, all the people and not only a privileged few could contribute to it.

## SOCIALIST NATIONALISATION

A national plan of development such as has been outlined above, using all resources, skills and energies to enable us to live better, is only possible once all the main industrial, financial and trading



concerns now in private hands are owned by society as a whole, and foreign trade is controlled in the interests of the people.

Industry cannot be run at the same time for the profit of private shareholders and for the good of the whole people. What is produced, how much is produced, what price it is sold at and in what market—all these decisions must be taken away from big business and entrusted to public authorities fully answerable to the people themselves. 5

The cornerstone of the economic policy of a Socialist Government is therefore socialist nationalisation, whose immediate objectives are: 10

**To extend democratic forms of ownership and control over the key industrial and financial centres of power in this country, which are at present held by the big monopolies;**

**To free the working class from capitalist exploitation and to release its energies for the building of socialism;** 15

**To make economic planning a reality and lay the basis for a great advance in the living conditions of the people.**

All large-scale industry and transport, the banks and insurance companies, and all wholesale and retail trading concerns owned by big business, will be brought into social ownership. This means that the sixty great monopolies, which with their subsidiaries control more than half the country's economic activity, will pass into the hands of the nation. Agricultural land owned by large landowners, companies and institutions, and urban land, except that belonging to owner-occupiers or small owners, will become public property. 20 25

The nationalisation of capitalist monopolies will leave owners of small enterprises, small shopkeepers and traders, undisturbed; they will be freed from restrictions imposed by the monopolies, and will benefit from the rising turnover resulting from the new conditions. 30

### **How Socialist Nationalisation will be Different**

This socialist nationalisation will be fundamentally different in important respects from the measures of nationalisation carried out within capitalism by past governments, including the Labour Government. 35

First, it will be much more far-reaching. The nationalisation measures of the post-war Labour Governments covered only a few industries, leaving in private hands the main sectors from which big business draws its profits and its power. Hence these nationalised industries could not become the basis of a socialist planned economy. They have been used, especially under Tory rule, to benefit capitalism as a whole by providing it with cheap transport and power, rather than for the welfare of the working 40 45

people. Socialist nationalisation, covering all large-scale industry and trade, will have no big-business interests to serve. It will be able to concentrate exclusively on developing industry to provide better working and living conditions for those employed and better service to the consumers.

Past measures of nationalisation have not done away with exploitation because the compensation paid to the former owners still guarantees to them their unearned income from the labour of the workers. Indeed, as nationalised industries modernised and expanded, an ever-rising toll of interest has to be paid to the private financiers who put up the money. Under socialist nationalisation funds will be made available from public sources for the modernisation and growth of industry on the lines of a broad national plan.

Compensation to former landowners and owners of nationalised industries would be paid in the form of annuities for the lifetime of former owners and of their wives and until their children reach school-leaving age. Such payments, based on a reasonable valuation of the property taken over, would be subject to a maximum equal to the average national wage.

Nationalisation under capitalism is bureaucratically administered. The governing boards of the nationalised industries are dominated by former owners and other capitalist interests. Trade union influence on their administration is being steadily squeezed out.

Socialist nationalisation will get rid of the capitalists and their representatives, and the governing boards will be composed entirely of workers and technicians. The democratic participation of the workers and their trade unions will be ensured in management from top to bottom, and their initiative will be encouraged. All proposals, plans and targets will be placed before the workers and their organisations in every industry and factory for discussion and joint decision.

Our highly developed trade union movement, with its independence and rights guaranteed by law, will have as its first responsibility the protection of the interests of the workers. The vigilance of trade union and shop steward organisations will be the best safeguard against bureaucratic administration or injustice, and will ensure that the workers' views and suggestions are listened to.

Special care will be taken to avoid over-centralisation in the administration of nationalised industries. For this purpose, and in order to provide a basis for local revenue, consideration will be given to the transfer from the central government to local authorities of certain enterprises that can best be administered locally, such as local transport services and gas and electricity distribution.

Within the broad national plan for each industry, drawn up by a National Planning Commission in consultation with the unions



from top to bottom, there will be wide scope for initiative and experiment by particular enterprises and groups. Local managers and trade union organisations will be encouraged to take responsibility and not merely wait for orders from above.

The workers and their organisations will have a real interest in ensuring efficient and rising production and cutting out waste, since every rise in production will mean increased earnings and a better standard of life. 5

### **The Co-operative Movement**

The ending of capitalist monopoly will give far greater opportunities for co-operatively owned enterprise, which is one of the forms of public ownership. 10

Co-operative organisations will be encouraged to use their accumulated funds and future surpluses in the development not only of their retail shops, but for production in suitable sectors of the economy, in order to raise substantially the proportion of co-operatively produced goods sold by the retail societies. 15

Co-operative societies, already firmly established in wholesale and retail trade, have a great historic importance for Britain, and would be given every encouragement to extend their services, alongside state and municipal enterprises, to ensure adequate shopping facilities in all localities. 20

The Co-operative movement, with its accumulated experience, would play a responsible part, alongside public organisations, in the organisation and control of supplies and distribution. 25

### **SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ADVANCE**

The need for social services, pensions and benefits has grown within capitalist society, but these have been granted grudgingly and in most cases only after long struggles by working and progressive people. Generally, only the minimum of services and the lowest pensions have been provided. 30

A Socialist Government would have the welfare of the people as its first consideration. All services and benefits would be provided by the Government or the local authorities as the right of the people.

The ownership and control by the people of all the main productive resources would provide the means for extending and improving the social services. The Government would take steps to bring a new spirit and purpose into them, and the people themselves would actively participate in running them. Everything would be done with the maximum possible speed in order to bring about quickly a fundamental improvement in the people's well-being and standard of living. 35 40

## Housing

The present position whereby the housing of the people is a source of profit to landlords, builders and financiers would be ended for ever.

- 5 One of the most pressing needs is to provide every family with a separate home let at a low rent. Nationalisation of the building materials monopolies and of the principal building firms would make possible the rapid building of new houses by a national building organisation and by the councils using direct labour.
- 10 Rented houses still privately owned would pass to the local authorities, and be improved or adapted to provide self-contained modern dwellings. All tenants of council houses would have security of tenure, and councils would be freed from the burden of interest on housing loans and thus enabled to let houses at low
- 15 rents.

The position of owner-occupiers would be eased by the abolition of mortgage interest charges and the lower cost of repairs.

- It will be necessary to plan and carry through as rapidly as possible the rebuilding of our congested cities, with planned
- 20 location of industry, open spaces and all facilities for a full community life.

The countryside would be preserved and modern amenities brought to the villages.

## Health

- 25 The National Health Service of 1948 was a landmark in the struggle for better health. Improved living and housing conditions in a Socialist Britain will help towards still further advance. It will be necessary to extend every branch of the Health Service, and re-direct it to the prime task of the prevention of disease, while
- 30 ensuring the best possible treatment that science can devise and making it freely available to all.

There must be a great extension of spas, holiday resorts and rest homes, sports grounds and indoor clubs, as well as better food, better homes and cleaner air.

- 35 New hospitals will be urgently needed to replace the present unsuitable and obsolete premises, and hundreds of health centres, particularly in industrial areas. An Occupational Health Service, covering the whole working population, is another urgent need. The maternity services would be extended, so that all mothers who
- 40 wished to could have their babies in hospital. There would be continuous care for old people. The Mental Health Service would be modernised and enlarged.

- For all patients, the service must be free. For the staff, good pay and conditions are essential. In quality the service should equal
- 45 or excel anything that can be purchased privately; in quantity it

should meet all the needs of all the people, to cure the sick and keep the healthy well.

## Education

The advance to socialism will provide opportunities for the full flowering of our people's creative abilities. At the same time it will require a much higher level of education than at present. If Britain's resources are to be fully developed for the benefit of the people, scientists and technicians will be needed in great numbers, not only to apply the results of technical and scientific research, but to win the new knowledge on which all major advances are based. Our educational system will need reshaping so that our future technicians and professional workers can be drawn from the whole child population.

Our aim is to create genuine equality of opportunity through a widespread system of nursery education, followed by common primary schools, through which all children will pass without selection tests into comprehensive secondary schools. There they will receive an all-round education until the age of eighteen.

Educational prospects for those over the age of eighteen will be transformed. Universities, technical colleges and other higher institutions will be greatly expanded within the national plan of higher education, and entry will be based on ability alone. Grants will be provided, on a scale sufficient to make students independent.

Conditions in the schools will be drastically improved, classes reduced in size, a free meals service made available for all children. Privately owned and so-called public schools would pass to the local authorities and be integrated with the national plan of education. Handicapped children would be specially cared for, to enable them, so far as possible, to overcome the disadvantages from which they suffer, and to equip them to make the most of their lives when they grow up.

## Cultural Opportunities

Our aim is not only to equip the new generation to meet the challenge of the scientific revolution now in progress. It is to give everyone access to humanity's rich heritage of learning and the arts, to help them to carry forward all that is best in our human and cultural traditions, to encourage them in the spirit of democracy and international brotherhood, and to enable them to go forward, swiftly and with certainty, to the building and enjoyment of a new life.

With this object, it is necessary to fight against all tendencies to vulgarise culture, or to deprive sections of the people of cultural opportunities. Every encouragement and material assistance will be given to science, art, literature, drama, music and all other

activities that can help the all-round development of men and women, young and old, and enrich their lives and leisure.

- Professional workers will have completely new opportunities in a Socialist Britain. The new purpose of society will make increasing demands on them, give their work a new social importance, and give unlimited scope to their creative abilities in the service of the people.

### **Leisure Facilities**

- With improved standards and shorter hours there will be more leisure time for everyone. A Socialist Government would see to it that leisure facilities, so many of which are now reserved for the wealthy, would be available for all. Many large country houses would be used as convalescent homes and holiday centres; the national parks would be extended and made more accessible to the people. No longer will working class youth be starved of playing fields, while the privileged few in public schools and elsewhere are lavishly catered for.

- Local authorities would be encouraged to develop many-sided recreational facilities—municipal theatres and cinemas, music, dancing, libraries, together with sports facilities of all kinds, so that our young people can enjoy all the advantages which the new society will bring.

### **Old People**

- Justice would be done to the old people. A Socialist Government would see to it that they would be cared for and helped in every possible way, and that health and social facilities are provided to guarantee them the utmost comfort and happiness.

- Pensions would immediately be raised and paid to all as a right, including those who continued to work. Local authorities, in addition to providing suitable homes in modern housing estates at low rents, would establish residential homes for the aged, laundry services, home helps, good food and similar services.

### **Benefits and Pensions**

- Benefits and pensions for the old, the widows, the disabled, the chronic sick and the unemployed, would be raised to a level which would remove the fear of insecurity and provide a decent standard of living to those who are temporarily or permanently incapable of work. These benefits would be paid as a right, and without the humiliation of the means test; they would be paid out of funds provided by industry and the Government, so that workers' insurance contributions could be abolished and with them the "contribution conditions" which today prevent many people from receiving benefit. Pensions for war disabled and for the dependents



of those killed in war would be substantially increased.

The provision of these and other social services would bring special relief and ease to women as wives, mothers and housewives. They would ensure equal opportunities for all children to develop and become valuable citizens. They would guarantee the utmost protection against ill health and disease that science can grant, and the maximum security for every individual. They would lay the basis for a happy life for all people from birth to old age. 5

### WHERE WOULD THE MONEY COME FROM?

The industrial and social development outlined above will cost a great deal. How will a Socialist Government find the money needed to carry out these plans? 10

In the long run, financial problems are subordinate to the use of our resources in human labour, our factories and the natural resources of our country. We live on real things, created by labour out of nature's gifts. Finance in a socialist society is a method of allocating the national product to the most socially useful ends, and in that sense is subordinate to the essential transformation of the system of production and the great expansion of productive resources which socialism brings with it. 15

The socialist transformation and the change in foreign and colonial policy would both make great savings in national expenditure and provide the Exchequer with new sources of revenue. A considerable saving would be effected by reducing armaments expenditure. A further great saving in Budget expenditure would result from the annulment of the National Debt, even after allowing for the drop in tax revenue and continued annuities where such payments were necessary. On the revenue side of the Budget, the proceeds of the nationalised monopolies would be directly available to the Exchequer, bringing in considerable sums, even after allowing for lower receipts from taxation and for payments on compensation annuities. 20 25 30

The actual revenue from nationalised concerns would be all the higher as a result of planning and the elimination of socially unnecessary competitive advertising and marketing and wasteful overlapping between firms and industries, and of the luxury "expense accounts" and other means now used to avoid taxation. 35

The greatest of all sources of additional income which would enable a Socialist Government to finance its great projects of social and economic advance would however be the rapid and continuous increase in productivity brought about by the planned development of production with the use of the most modern techniques, and the knowledge by the workers that they were working for themselves. 40

The nationalisation of the whole banking and financial system as well as of all forms of insurance would place very considerable

funds in the hands of the state, which would be available for the financing of building and industrial development.

The immense savings on present Budget expenditure, combined with the new sources of state revenue arising from nationalisation, would enable the Socialist Government to reduce taxation now falling on working people and to make substantially greater sums available for housing and education and health and the raising of benefits and pensions; as well as to allocate the necessary funds for the expansion and modernisation of our productive resources.

The fundamental change in the relations between the state and large-scale industry and finance would not only help to provide the revenue for current needs, but would enable the major national resources to be allocated from year to year to the most socially useful ends, ensuring both a continuous rise in the living and working conditions of the people and the expansion of industry and agriculture on which further improvements must depend.

### THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The Communist Party unites in its ranks the vanguard of the militant socialist fighters of the working class, inheriting the traditions of generations of struggle of the democratic and working class movement of our country. Its policy and programme are based on the impregnable foundations of the scientific theory of socialism developed by Marx and Lenin, embodying the experience of the working class of all countries. History has shown that the theory of scientific socialism and the political activity based on it bring victory to the working class, and that without a Communist Party the battle for socialism cannot be won.

The Communist Party is necessary, to infuse a socialist consciousness and aim into the working class struggle, to give leadership in the daily struggles and to wage the fight on all fronts—political, industrial, social and ideological.

The Communist Party aims to win the whole Labour movement for policies based on the present and future interests of the working people of our country—policies which lead to the isolation and defeat of the Tories and of all reactionary trends in the Labour movement, and open the road for the advance to socialism. The Communist Party is essential to the strengthening and victory of class and socialist ideas in the Labour movement. With its class outlook and policies, its independence, its active membership and its paper, the *Daily Worker*, the Communist Party is able to work consistently and as an organised body to strengthen the militancy and socialist outlook of the movement.

Because the Communist Party has always fought against the influence of capitalist ideas in the movement, a section of the

Labour leadership has opposed its affiliation to the Labour Party, and has sought to isolate the Communist Party from the movement by a series of bans and proscriptions.

The removal of these bans, and the joint activity of all sections of the movement in the fight against capitalism and its Tory Party, are indispensable. 5

The Communist Party has no separate interests from those of the British working class. It is confident that the united fight of the Labour movement, of which it is an integral part, will win socialism in our country. It supports every action of the Labour Party, trade unions and Co-operatives which serves the cause of the working class and the advance to socialism. Far from seeking to disrupt or destroy the Labour Party, the Communist Party aims to strengthen the organisation, unity, class outlook and readiness to fight of the whole Labour movement, so that the Tories can be overwhelmingly defeated and a Labour Government returned to office to carry out a programme corresponding to the demands and interests of the working people. 10 15

It works for a united Labour movement with a clear policy of peace, social and economic advance, and self-determination for the colonial peoples. Such a policy would rally round the Labour movement all the progressive forces of the nation. It would win the co-operation and support of men and women and young people who at present are not associated with Labour but who are striving for progressive social aims and a better life through tenants' and residents' associations, women's institutes, British Legion sections, youth organisations, church organisations, and similar national and local bodies. 20 25

With this co-operation and support in the many-sided struggle against reactionary Tory policies at home and abroad, and for positive social advances nationally and locally, a united Labour movement could ensure the overwhelming defeat of the Tories in parliamentary and council elections, and build up the broader movement that is needed for the achievement of this programme and the socialist transformation of Britain. 30 35

This is the aim of the Communist Party. It puts this programme before the Labour movement and the people as the way to win socialism by peaceful, democratic means that accord with our country's traditions. At the same time the Communist Party emphasises its conviction that only the unity, strength and determination of the Labour movement will make this advance possible. 40

The Communist Party devotes all its efforts to winning the Labour movement and the majority of the British people for the struggle that will bring a free and happy, strong and powerful Socialist Britain. It calls for the support and enrolment in its ranks of all workers, trade unionists, co-operators, men and women. 45

Socialists and progressive people, who recognise the need for basic social change and the socialist reconstruction of society, and who are prepared to play their part in the realisation of these glorious aims.

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## COMMISSION ON The British Road to Socialism

The Commission appointed by the Executive Committee to prepare this revised draft of *The British Road to Socialism* held thirteen meetings between 15 August and 1 December 1956. The members of the Commission and their attendances were as under:

W. Alexander	...	6	Margaret Hunter	...	5
M. Bennett	...	0	T. John	...	2
Emile Burns	...	13	M. Johnstone	...	10
J. R. Campbell	...	2	A. Jordan	...	0
R. P. Dutt	...	12	Arnold Kettle	...	6
J. Gollan	...	9	G. Knox	...	6
J. Hostettler	...	11	G. Matthews	...	11
R. Simons	...	...	...	...	8

It will be seen from the above that Comrades M. Bennett and A. Jordan were unable to function on the Commission. Other comrades were unable to attend regularly because of their conditions of work.

The Commission received 12 contributions from District Committees, Advisory Committees and Groups; 18 from Area Committees and Branches; and 21 from individual comrades; in addition to letters sent in to *World News*. The Commission desires to express its thanks for all these contributions, which have been of great help in calling attention to points that needed to be considered and in suggesting useful formulations.

JOHN GOLLAN,  
Chairman of the Commission.